

“NEIGHBORHOODS THAT WORK”

Award Recipients, 2001

Ward 1 – Chuck Beaty

Category 1: Friends of Mt. Rubidoux (President: George Flower)

Friends of Mt. Rubidoux has done a lot to not only maintain/preserve the mountain and its trails for the rest of the community but to enhance the neighborhood around the mountain in the process. They provide the eyes and ears for the neighborhood and increase a sense of security and community at its base. Activities include regular graffiti cleanups and general trail maintenance. They also provide plastic bag dispensers for dog owners' use, trash cans, and mileage markers. Members have donated seating along the trail and walk the mountain daily. Membership in this group is open to anyone interested!

Category 2: Colony Heights Historic Neighborhood Association (Chair: David McNiel)

Colony Heights Historic Neighborhood Association was organized in the mid-90's and 78 homes are members. Through the association, the neighborhood was able to establish itself as a Historic District. Activities include seasonal alley clean-ups, mobile crime watch rotated among the neighbors, a quarterly newsletter, regular organization meetings, and block parties. The neighborhood installed neighborhood signage for their historic district and was one of the first neighborhoods to successfully lobby for traffic humps (Redwood Drive). They were also successful in having a stop sign installed at Redwood Drive and Fourth Street to further calm traffic. This group has been held up as a model for other neighborhood organizations, and their leadership has made themselves available to help other neighborhoods organize. Boundaries of the association are Redwood Drive, Mission Inn Avenue, Third Street, and Pine Street.

Category 3: Heritage Square Neighborhood Association (Chair: James Youden)

The residents of Heritage Square are united in their love of their old homes and the hard work that they have put into not only the structures but the neighborhood as well. Their neighborhood has been in a revitalization upswing with the many dollar houses and move-ons that have been lovingly restored. The neighbors contributed to establishment of a historic district and are working to establish guidelines for renovation. They have also been instrumental in traffic calming, improved street lighting, and this fall/winter two of their member homes will be featured on Home and Garden TV! This group meets regularly to discuss and work on neighborhood improvement and quality of life issues. They also are host to the Twelfth Night fundraiser put on every year to benefit the Old Riverside Foundation. Boundaries of the association are First to Fifth, Mulberry to Orange.

Ward 2 – Ameal Moore

Category 1: Sycamore Highlands Community Group (Contact: Lynn Paulsen)

The Sycamore Highlands Community Group came together to address their concerns about the City increasing fees for landscape maintenance in their new community in Sycamore Canyon/Canyon Springs Neighborhood. Through their efforts, they were able to establish a relationship with City Hall, get their concerns about lack of landscape addressed, and now are endeavoring to have a park installed in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is a very cohesive and friendly group, mostly located near Abernathy Drive. They hope that their success at organizing and getting things done as well as making new friends will be spread throughout the greater neighborhood area.

Category 2: UC Riverside Neighborhood Association (Co-Chairs Letitia Pepper and Gurumantra Khalsa)

This neighborhood organization was formed in the 1997 to address issues dealing with code compliance and beautification. They hold regular neighborhood meetings and have expanded their focus to many neighborhood issues including updates on police activity, the refurbishment of Highland Park, traffic calming, and support for a community center. UC Riverside Neighborhood Association also holds social events such as their annual Luau and Halloween party and their summer "walk-about" on Friday nights. This organization remains one of Riverside's most organized neighborhood associations and has built a close community. They have incorporated into their group a number of Neighborhood Watch groups and continue to seek new members to their group through outreach efforts such a newsletter and meeting reminder signs posted in front yards. UCR often brings in UCRNA to help guide them in their campus planning. They are, essentially, the voice of the neighborhood. The neighborhood organization boundaries are the triangle created by Watkins Drive, Spruce Street, and Sugarloaf Mountain.

Category 3: Neighborhood Appreciation Day Committee/Michael Street Neighborhood (Chair: Revia Chandler)

The Neighborhood Appreciation Day Committee emerged over the last 20 years lead by Revia Chandler. It began as a barbeque and musical revue in Revia's back yard to thank her Michael Street neighbors for helping her and her family through a difficult period. The event was such a success that it has become a yearly tradition. The Neighborhood Appreciation Day Committee puts on their Motown Review and Barbecue each year for the Michael Street neighborhood of about 200 people. The show incorporates the energy and talent of multiple generations and families who put in countless hours over a six-month period in preparation. Together they select the year's music, choreograph the dancing, and help each other perfect their performances. Revia sews all of the costumes, and the neighborhood coordinates the planning of the barbecue. Year by year the show has gotten bigger and more professional. Last year they held it at Bobby Bonds Park auditorium and produced a video. They have kept a running diary over the years in scrap books where one can watch the neighborhood kids grow from youngsters to college students and beyond. Moms, Dads, and even grandparents perform and cook. Through their efforts, the neighborhood is extremely close and really watches out for each other. They exemplify the best of what it means to be a neighborhood, a family.

Their next Motown review will take place in June of 2003. The Neighborhood Appreciation Day Committee is in the process of acquiring non-profit status as a community-building group in order to help raise funds for what has become an increasingly expensive proposition. No fee is charged to the neighborhood for the show or the barbecue. The neighborhood boundaries, in general, are Michael Street in the Eastside neighborhood.

Ward 3 – Joy Defenbaugh

Category 1: Historic Wood Streets Association (Chair: David Vangsness)

Historic Wood Streets Neighborhood Association formed a number of years ago in large part to tackle issues associated with RCC student parking and expansion. By coming together as a group, HWSA has successfully established a working relationship with RCC administration to collaborate in problem-solving. The group carefully keeps watch for issues affecting the neighborhood and has the organizational structure in place to respond. The HWSNA is open to all residents of the Woods Streets. They are united in their love of Riverside, their neighborhood, their historic homes, and an old-fashioned sense of community."

Category 2: Cape Cod/Riviera Arms Apartments Neighborhood Watch (Contact: William Turpin, Manager)

The Cape Cod and Riviera Arms Apartments, managed by Mr. William Turpin, are comprised of 72 units. The residents of both complexes are actively involved in a Neighborhood Watch group that meets monthly. A newsletter is produced and distributed monthly to keep neighbors informed. There is a real focus on the kids at the apartment evidenced by a Saturday kids' club where children do arts and crafts and residents volunteer their time and talent to teach the kids

and share in the fun. This year, as part of National Night Out, the Cape Cod/Riviera Arms Apartments held a fantastic party in their parking lot. There was a bouncer for the kids, the fire department brought a fire truck, and pony rides. Everyone came out to share in the fun and celebrate their unity against crime. Later that evening, the group held a “march against crime” around the apartments and up Panorama Drive.

This Neighborhood Watch group is a model for other apartment complexes and shows that a “neighborhood” can be created wherever there are people who care.

Category 3: Beatty Drive Neighbors between Palm and Arch Way (Contact: Dwight Tate)

The Beatty Drive Neighbors between Palm and Arch Way began organizing neighborhood activities as a whole block about 10 years ago through the energy and enthusiasm of 3 ladies, Tami Bakewell, Susan Sampson, and Audrey Boyer. Neighborhood Activities include an annual block party including a chili cook-off, a bake-off and games. The neighborhood also holds an annual Christmas food and gift drive for an underprivileged family through the Salvation Army. At Christmas they decorate the street light lampposts and light luminarias on Christmas Eve. An annual flag display takes place on July 4th with over 200 flags lining lawns down the street. On Halloween there is a party for the youngest children. Families babysit and watch out for each others' children, and neighbors look in on the older residents, some of whom have lived there for 45 to 50 years. They have established a permanent flag display to memorialize those lost on Sept. 11. Faces and cars are familiar to everyone and everyone waves to each other when walking or driving by. These neighbors have turned their neighborhood into a wonderful place to call home.

Ward 4 – Maureen Kane

Category 1: Casa Blanca Community Action Group (Chair: Jenny Rivera; John Garcia, Vice Chair; Mike Garcia, Secretary)

The Casa Blanca Community Action Group was formed in the 1970's to increase communication between local government and the police with Casa Blanca and to establish community leadership and a voice for the neighborhood. Since then, they have met monthly at the Villegas Community Center. At these meetings the group hears reports from the police department, park and recreation department, the Home of Neighborly Services, and the Project Area Committee. The CAG provides a monthly forum for residents to bring issues to the table for discussion. In addition, City Hall and others outside of the community have a place to come when they want to share information or need community input in local issues. The Casa Blanca Community Action Group has a far-reaching effect on the community.

Category 2: Yorkshire Heights Neighborhood Association (Chair: Gus Atwell)

Yorkshire Heights Neighborhood Association was formed in July of 2001 in response to two neighborhood issues that had come to the attention of several residents: One issue was a board and care home in the neighborhood and the other was an incident involving a suspicious vehicle that had approached a child.

The neighbors decided it was time to form a Neighborhood Watch, and they organized their first meeting inviting their councilperson and the Office of Neighborhoods to join them at the RPD storefront that services their neighborhood. Since that first meeting, the neighbors have formed an active neighborhood association, their group-home issue has been resolved, they participated in National Night Out last August, and have organized block parties. The neighborhood now meets regularly to discuss and prioritize issues, hear from guest speakers, and strategize solutions that will maintain and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. They have made new friends with each other and with City Hall. Neighbors now know one another, and a sense of community has been established.

Category 3: Crossroads Neighborhood Association (Chair: Ranela Vallejo)

Former Los Angeles County residents Richard and Margaret Burns chose Riverside's Orangecrest neighborhood as the community that they wanted to retire in. After moving into their new surroundings in a new city, they quickly became the "Mom and Pop" in a neighborhood full of young families. Richard and Margaret have been instrumental in turning their neighborhood into a "family." As a neighborhood they have organizing fantastic annual block parties which have served to link up neighbors. Richard and a neighbor Ranela Vallejo brought neighbors together and established the Crossroads Neighborhood Association. The group has met to plan events and discuss neighborhood issues.

Ward 5 – Ed Adkison

Category 2: Presidente Estates Neighborhood Watch (Block Captain: Phyllis Wells)

Presidente Estates Neighborhood Watch is located in the Arlington neighborhood and bordered by Magnolia Avenue, Roosevelt, Myers, and Primrose. Eight years ago the neighborhood was plagued by an intimidating drug house. The neighbors, tired of watching elementary school-aged kids being pulled into drug activity, rose up and did something. They filed a Safe Streets Now action against the property owner and met with the Mayor and police chief to see what could be done. As a result of four months of diligent work, 15 arrests were made out of the house and the tenants evicted. Since then, the group has met regularly to discuss not only crime issues but all neighborhood issues such as community development projects and neighborhood revitalization. They are a very close-knit neighborhood and many residents have lived there for many years.

Ward 6 – Terri Thomspson

Category 2: Friends of Myra Linn

The neighbors surrounding Myra Linn park, with support from Park and Recreation and RPD's "Operation Safe Parks" program, were able to make dramatic changes in the park and in the process neighbors are connecting, getting to know each other, and are better able to access city services. This neighborhood group helped put on a National Night Out event at the park on August 4 that was very well attended by the neighborhood and sent a message that the neighborhood was united against crime. The residents' efforts were detailed in an editorial which appeared in the Press Enterprise on October 1, 2001. Friends of Myra Linn hope to resume a tradition of regular block parties and hold regular meetings to prioritize neighborhood issues and strategize solutions.

Ward 7 – Laura Pearson

Category 1: Country Bluffs Neighborhood Watch

Country Bluffs Neighborhood Watch came together through the efforts of Valerie Littlehawk and Duane Plankel, a husband and wife team, who were frustrated by blight in their La Sierra neighborhood. Recognizing the importance of community involvement and the limitation of the City to solve the problems, they organized their neighborhood to help. They organized neighborhood clean-ups and graffiti paint-outs. They set up a phone tree for communication and established a disaster phone tree and a "who to call if you are scared" phone tree. A Safe Streets Now action was brought against the property owner of a large area of vacant land which was contributing to the blight issues, and the neighbors worked with city hall to have a barricade installed at a critical area to discourage the criminal activity taking place there. Since the neighborhood got involved, calls for service to the police department have diminished, and the neighborhood has become a community.

Category 2: La Sierra Hills Neighborhood Watch

In 1992, the residents of La Sierra Hills decided to join together to build neighborhood relationships and organize to keep crime out of their neighborhood. They established a Neighborhood Watch and held meetings to establish priorities and identify positive ways to

maintain their quality of life. Over the years, the group has grown to include an Area Coordinator, Tom Martin, who works closely with over ten Block Captains to report suspicious activity, mediate neighbor disputes, publish newsletters to announce births, promotions, etc., and schedule seasonal parties where they demonstrate what being a good neighbor is all about.

Category 3: Hedrick Avenue Neighborhood Watch

During the past year, a major drug lab was discovered on Hedrick Avenue and inspired the residents to mobilize in an effort to strengthen neighborhood ties and enhance the beauty of their neighborhood. Longtime residents Bonny Poulsen, Tony Esquibel, Belle Beaven, and Bill MacFarlane initiated the effort by talking to neighbors, listing concerns, and organizing a series of meetings with police, code enforcement, the Office of Neighborhoods, and the Riverside County Probation Department. The number of residents participating rose to over 40 in a short time as they expressed the commitment to making a difference in their neighborhood. They have established a list of priorities and have been reporting crimes and quality of life issues to city departments and attended training workshops through the Office of Neighborhoods on effective neighborhood strategies. Recently the group held formal elections and established eight subcommittees which range from home improvement to holiday toy drives to a welcome committee for out-reach to new residents. They truly embody “neighborliness and caring.”